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STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Senate Committee on Economic Development and Veterans and Military Affairs
AB 61
October 4th, 2011

Good morning I would like to thank the Chair and members of the Committee for hearing AB61 today.

Many of us may not realize that every time we send an email or transact business over our computers, chances are that we are utilizing a data center. Data centers house the necessary components to run large networks, including back up power supplies, servers, and environmental controls to keep the equipment cool and the atmosphere static free. Data centers are where business transactions occur, research is conducted, and the capability to store endless amounts of data created by millions of electronic transmissions every minute.

As our lifestyles move closer to a paperless world, households, businesses, local, state, and federal governments are becoming more dependant on data centers and the services that they provide. Many businesses end up having to absorb the high cost of operating data centers that are critical to their daily operations.

Data centers use lots of power; they use about 2% of the total electricity consumed in the US annually. With rising energy costs and greater IT demands require governments and corporations to focus on improving data center energy efficiency.

A "green" data center is constructed to run as economically and environmentally friendly as possible. All computer, electrical, and lighting systems as well as building materials are designed and selected for maximum energy efficiency, minimal environmental impact, and sustainability. These green data centers operate on 40% less electricity, dramatically reducing energy costs and improving the company's bottom line, while helping the environment in a way that does not hurt businesses that rely on these data centers for day to day operations.

Wisconsin appears to have the perfect atmosphere to build a green data center our climate plays a key role in this. Wisconsin also has a low chance for natural disasters and a qualified work force.

Wisconsin has fallen behind in building and maintaining its IT infrastructure, which has cause many of our neighbors like Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois to entice businesses to build green data centers. If businesses and corporations feel that Wisconsin's IT infrastructure is insufficient they may chose to not expand their business or go elsewhere that can support the IT infrastructure needed. There are some companies that are planning on building green data centers here in Wisconsin by creating this tax credit it will allow for them to build a better, more aggressive style of data center.

The tax credit will be capped at $2 million over the biennium, by implementing these incentives, Wisconsin can attract high-tech business looking to create environmentally friendly data centers. SB31 is a low-cost method of creating jobs and businesses in our state and Wisconsin should catch up to the rest of the country by attracting these high-tech, sustainable businesses in our state.

Alberta Darling
Wisconsin State Senator
Member, Joint Committee on Finance

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON JOBS, ECONOMY AND
SMALL BUSINESS
ASSEMBLY BILL 61
OCTOBER 4, 2011

Thank you Chair Williams and members of the Assembly Committee on Jobs, Economy and Small Business Committee for allowing me this opportunity to offer my testimony on Assembly Bill 61, the green data center bill.

As many of you know, a data center is a physical place that houses a computer network's most critical systems, including backup power supplies, air conditioning, and security applications. We're talking a large amount of data here, stored in a large number of computers. Facilities like this require a large amount of power. This bill seeks to encourage the building of a data center which is designed for maximum energy efficiency and minimum environmental impact.

Right now in Wisconsin, we are trying to attract jobs and business to the state. If companies feel that Wisconsin's IT infrastructure is insufficient and would limit their potential, those companies won't expand in Wisconsin, or choose to move here. We can't afford to be at a disadvantage to our neighboring states like Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota in attracting these types of jobs.

The Missouri legislature is considering incentive packages to bring data centers to their state. Iowa used incentives to bring a Google data center to Council Bluffs.

Currently, Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina and Iowa all have data center incentive programs. Colorado, New York and New Jersey are all other states also working on recruiting data centers.

Wisconsin has several assets in its favor for locating data centers here. We have a cool climate, which is helpful for the amount of heat put off by the machines in a data center. We have very few natural disasters like earthquakes and hurricanes to worry about, and we have a qualified work force. Passing Assembly Bill 61 would just be one more factor to make Wisconsin more attractive as a spot to locate a data center.